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Part III has similar material on the social sciences and contains chapters on the teaching of economics, sociology, history, political science, philosophy, ethics, psychology, and education. Parts IV, V, and VI tell how to teach the languages and literature, the arts, and vocational subjects. Inasmuch as all of the contributors were selected because of their scholarship, their interest in the teaching phase of the subject, and their reputation in the academic world, what they have to say on the teaching of their special subjects should be of great value to actual and prospective college teachers.

Rural school conditions in Ohio.—Inasmuch as there are in the United States at present approximately 215,000 one-room rural schools, a study of these schools in one state should interest a large body of school people.¹ This study contains the findings of the state-wide school survey that was made in Ohio during the summer and fall of 1913. It has sections devoted to legislative history, the one-room school, supervision, centralization and consolidation, community activities and extension work, the rural high school and the county normal school. Some of the outstanding things disclosed by the survey were: (1) not over half of the teachers in the rural schools were graduates of high school; (2) 60 per cent of the teachers in the one-room rural schools had taught five years or less; (3) nearly half of the teachers whose schools were surveyed had no professional training whatever; (4) the rural schools were poorly provided with educational, social, and sanitary equipment; (5) there was no uniformity as to records and reports; (6) many boards of education were breaking the school law in a variety of ways. The findings resulted in a new code of school laws. How these new laws are working out in practice is described in the report. The study as a whole should be of great interest to all persons in any way concerned with the problems of rural education.

Living or preparation for life.—In the growing list of experiments in the reconstruction of the elementary-school curriculum, that conducted in the University Elementary School at Columbia, Missouri, by Professor J. L. Merriam, is a conspicuous one, and represents perhaps as radical a departure from the conventional curriculum as any. It attempts a complete abandonment of the course of study organized in terms of the three R's or other conventional subjects, and the use of one in which the several features are distinguished only by the activities and attitudes of the pupils, the material being taken from the child's natural and social environment without intermediate organization as subject-matter. It would make the elementary-school work life, and not preparation for life, conceiving its purpose to be: "To help boys and girls do better in all those wholesome activities in which they normally engage."

¹ VERNON M. RIEGEL, *A Study of Rural School Conditions in Ohio*. Columbus, Ohio: Department of Public Instruction, 1920. Pp. 175.

In *Child Life and the Curriculum*,¹ Professor Merriam sets forth in great detail all the charges against the traditional curriculum, explains the philosophy underlying the experiment he is conducting, and elaborates a set of principles for curriculum-making. He presents clearly and fully the workings of the University Elementary School, and gives a comparison of the attainments of pupils who have gone from it into high schools with those of other pupils in those high schools, indicating that mastery of the "tool" subjects may be quite as efficient when they are dealt with incidentally as phases of normal child-life activities as when they are made the object of direct attack.

He believes that the problems of minimum essentials and of motivation disappear entirely when the curriculum is selected directly from real life and is directed "to enabling boys and girls to be efficient in what they are now doing," and only secondarily to preparing them to be efficient later. The use of games in class work he condemns as the prostitution of the higher value to the lower, play being "a phase of life co-ordinate with work," the effectiveness of which the school must seek to promote. Measurement of educational results, he thinks, must be, like the curriculum itself, in terms of life-activities in normal settings, the standardization of accomplishment with reference to isolated abilities being not only not significant but even dangerous.

A review of the illustrative outlines of material used in observation, as given in the book, leads one to feel that underneath them there lies some more specific basis of selection than is stated in the author's "principles of curriculum making"—that decision as to what phases of the child's environment shall receive the school's emphasis is not unrelated to the general preparation for adult activity, the principle which in spite of mistakes in application is responsible for the traditional curriculum. One may doubt if the author gives adequate consideration to the element of habituated response in education; may find some of his conclusions from well-known studies in the field of education surprising; and may be unwilling to see measurement deferred until after the attainment of seemingly impossible conditions. Nevertheless he will recognize in the book and the experiment it reports a contribution to the great effort to provide a curriculum more closely related to life, more fully recognizing the principle of self-activity, and more truly a part of normal childhood.

Common-sense suggestions for the inexperienced teacher.—With the intent to make the content "specific direction" rather than "a general discussion of educational principles," Superintendent H. E. Waits, in *Practical Problems of the School*,² gives a thoroughly common-sense discussion of such matters as

¹ JUNIUS L. MERRIAM, *Child Life and the Curriculum*. Yonkers-on-the-Hudson, New York: World Book Co., 1920. Pp. xii+538. \$3.60.

² HARMON EBERT WAITS, *Practical Problems of the School*. Chicago: Benj. H. Sanborn & Co., 1920. Pp. xxxiii+278.